

Position Description

Farmland Preservation Program Manager (Environmental Analysis and Review Specialist – Adv.)

POSITION SUMMARY:

Under general supervision, this position serves as a technical expert and key resource on land use programs with an emphasis on those administered under Chapters 91, 92, and 93, Wisconsin Statutes. This position is responsible for information and education related to the local implementation and regulation of land use. This position will work with local governments to support their efforts and provide education on farmland preservation and related state land use programs.

As part of the planning and ordinances unit within the Bureau of Land and Water Resources, this position will implement components of the Farmland Preservation Program (FPP), assuming high levels of responsibility for program activities such as certification of farmland preservation plans and ordinances, designation of agricultural enterprise areas (AEA), processing of farmland preservation agreements, the purchase of agricultural conservation easement program (PACE), and implementation of conservation compliance. This position also assists as needed with other programs in the unit.

Goals and Worker Activities:

45% Goal A: Administer the farmland preservation program, working in cooperation with Bureau staff and various stakeholder groups (e.g., government entities, non-profit organizations, and landowners, etc.).

- A.1 Coordinate the designation of new AEAs, gathering data and reviewing completed petition information for presentation to DATCP Board and Secretary, and communicating directly with petitioners about designation results.
- A.2 Identify potential areas of conflict with statutory requirements and provide recommendations to Unit Leader, Section Chief, Bureau Director, Division Administrator and Secretary's office on the resolution of new or complex situations, and offer suggestions for program improvements and any related farmland preservation legislation. Track legislation and activities of other outside groups to assess potential impact on the unit and respective programs.
- A.3 Support designated AEAs in identifying and achieving their farmland preservation and agricultural economic development goals. Support opportunities of interest to AEAs, including grant opportunities or other activities and assist with engaging in those opportunities.
- A.4 Process farmland preservation agreements, including modifications, amendments and relinquishments and review, maintain and update database(s) for tracking farmland preservation plans, ordinances, agricultural enterprise areas and farmland preservation agreements.
- A.5 Support local governments (counties, towns, cities or villages) in identifying and achieving their farmland preservation goals via planning or zoning for agricultural use, including administration of the existing framework for the PACE program.
- A.6 Review farmland preservation plans and farmland preservation zoning ordinances for compliance with Chapter 91 and ATCP 49 and review and recommend certification applications for plans, ordinances, extensions and amendments.
- A.7 Evaluate emerging issues, interpret their impact on program areas, and make recommendations for administrative rule changes. Participate in or perform rule making tasks (e.g. draft scope statements, analyze change impacts, etc.).
- A.8 Provide recommendations for managers for program and process improvement.

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35% Goal B: Provide review and analysis as part of implementing programs related to farmland preservation and soil and water management.

- B.1 Perform program planning and management regarding elements of the farmland preservation initiatives and other land use programs focused on the implementation of soil and water management.
- B.2 Prepare reports as required and respond to inquiries from landowners, local governments, tax preparers, planning consultants and state agencies.
- B.3 Develop policies and procedures for farmland preservation program, including agricultural enterprise areas, the purchase of agricultural conservation easements, farmland preservation planning and farmland preservation zoning and coordinate program administration within department and external partners.
- B.4 Provide assessment of agricultural, environmental or conservation program data.
- B.5 Implement environmental programs and policies related to soil and water conservation, including working with other staff to advance program and policy initiatives to improve local implementation of sound land use practices.
- B.6 Coordinate with the nutrient management program staff to develop informational and outreach materials for the implementation of conservation compliance as it relates to the farmland preservation program or unit initiatives.

20% Goal C: Provide technical assistance and outreach on farmland preservation program components to increase participation in the program.

- C.1 Provide outreach to local government staff and officials, farmers and farm organizations, tax preparers, non-profit and environmental organizations and others to meet state goals and objectives related to farmland preservation, land use planning, conservation and other bureau programs.
- C.2 Identify audiences in need of further information regarding aspects of the farmland preservation program.
- C.3 Work with other staff to implement farmland preservation planning grants as vehicle to facilitate participation in the program.
- C.4 Work as part of a team to design a strategy to increase farmland preservation program participation through signing of farmland preservation agreements in AEAs. Evaluate opportunities to facilitate farmland preservation zoning certification in cooperation with landowners and local governments.
- C.5 Develop and maintain explanatory materials for elements of farmland preservation program and interaction of farmland preservation with other programs in Land and Water Bureau.
- C.6 Explain state soil and water conservation standards to interested landowners, county staff and local government officials and how they fit into FPP and county land and water plans.
- C.7 Conduct regular outreach/create content of interest for planning for agriculture, zoning for farmland preservation, and agricultural enterprise areas through in person meetings, webinars, workshops, field days, guidance documents or printed materials.

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Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Required by the Position:

- A. Knowledge of principles, methods, and practices related to rural land use planning and farmland preservation and the implementation of similar conservation programs.
- B. Knowledge and skills related to research and analysis of policies and programs. This includes the ability to apply statutory provisions related to AEAS, farmland preservation plans, farmland preservation zoning ordinances, and farmland preservation agreements.
- C. Effective written and oral communication, with a capacity to communicate land use planning and technical concepts as they relate to conservation.
- D. Knowledge of education and outreach techniques, including ability to administer effective outreach programs.
- E. Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to develop networks with a variety of government and outside agency representatives.
- F. Knowledge and skills in the practice, procedures, and principles of program assessment, evaluation and planning.
- G. Strong organizational and program management skills including the ability to establish priorities, organize workloads, manage grants and track data.
- H. Ability to document processes and procedures for use in training by others.
- I. Ability to function effectively in a team environment.
- J. Ability to use computer programs including Microsoft Office Software, and working knowledge of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and related software.

PERSONAL CONTACTS AND THEIR PURPOSE:

- A. *Unit Supervisor and Section Chief:* to discuss problems, exchange information, evaluate policies and procedures, recommend solutions, and establish and coordinate work schedules and assignments. Bureau director, as needed, to recommend actions for identified problems, discuss positions on issues, and solutions to be implemented.
- B. *Division administrator and bureau director:* to evaluate programs and current work plans, recommend modifications to work plans, discuss status of current projects and activities, and identify any needed changes to policies, procedures, rules or statutes.
- C. *Department secretary:* to assist in the discussion and resolution of program or section issues, if necessary.
- D. *Advisory committees and groups:* to summarize programmatic information, review reimbursement requests, and to discuss and obtain advice on proposed statutory, rule, and policy changes related to administration of grants.
- E. *Regulated industry:* to explain programmatic issues or policies related to the department's grant programs.
- F. *Staff from other states, including the university system, and federal agencies:* to consult on and discuss program-related issues.
- G. *General public:* to provide information on programs and policies related to unit programs.

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DISCRETION AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

- A. Core objectives are set by legislative authority contained primarily in Chapters 91, 92, 93 Wis. Stats. Work objectives and priorities are established in consultation with the Unit Supervisor, Section Chief and Bureau Director. Within these basic guidelines, the incumbent will exercise significant discretion in carrying out daily work activities and establishing work schedules.
- B. Basic guidelines are set by statute and administrative rules. General policy is established by the DATCP Board and Secretary, with the Division Administrator and Bureau Director providing more specific direction. The incumbent will have authority to recommend and initiate revisions to Department rules, guidance materials and procedures, particularly those involving program planning and technical issues.
- C. General policies and administrative procedures are reviewed by the Unit Supervisor and Section Chief before being implemented. Except for new programs, the general and administrative policies are reviewed annually. The performance evaluation system provides for annual review of individual work with the Unit Supervisor, and program evaluations are used to assess the success of program direction, procedures, and policies.
- D. There is some review of new program activities by other agencies that have related or overlapping authorities for protection of water resources. This review is to assure program consistency on both individual case and overall program levels.
- E. Work assignments are determined by the incumbent in consultation with the Unit Supervisor. There is very limited review of work activities, except as they relate to new program development, or development of regulations or policies. Supervision is of a general nature.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS: No unusual physical demands.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Most work is performed in an office. In-state travel and occasional out-of-state travel may be required; when travel occurs, work may entail extended work hours or occasional overnight stays. The position may include occasional field activities.

Possession of, or ability to obtain, a valid driver's license; or the ability to provide one's own transportation for work purposes.